



Washington State Home Care Quality Authority

Spring 2009

Updates and Highlights

By Rick Hall, Executive Director

The Home Care Quality Authority truly appreciates your interest in our activities and for taking the time to read our Newsletter. As always, my thanks go out to our great staff and Board members who make this all happen.

Here is the latest news and some highlights of our activities:

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Budget Crisis: House Budget Directs Closure of Some Registry Sites!

Specifically, PS HB 1244 sets forth a 29% reduction in our budget for the upcoming 2009-2011 biennium. Of even more concern to us is that we are directed to accomplish a large part of this reduction (\$545,000) by closing some of our Home Care Referral Registry sites. This proposed reduction, while small against the backdrop of the overall budget, will result in very direct and adverse consequences for consumers and workers.

The proposed cuts would deny access to the Referral Registry to consumers who prefer to hire their own in-home care workers. It will also deny access to the workers who are looking for employment and/or more hours as paid caregivers. Given other budget proposals that would reduce in-home care hours for some consumers, many workers will be looking to the Registry to help them get enough hours of work so that they can continue to receive their health care. Unfortunately, the very tool that would help to mitigate the impacts of fewer hours for workers will not be available to them in many Washington counties if this reduction is sustained.

The Home Care Referral Registry has been very successful in helping consumers find screened and qualified home care workers. The Registry has been fully operational since January of 2007 and has:

- Managed a system that has provided employment for more than 4,000 individual providers.
- Provided service to nearly 4,000 consumers of in-home care.
- Screened more than 20,000 worker applications for placement on the Registry.

Our Board and our staff understand the hard decisions that have to be made in these very difficult economic times. We also understand that everyone needs to share in the responsibility to achieve the necessary budget reductions. To this end, we have been working to identify programs and expenses that would achieve the reductions directed to us in both the Governor's budget (13%) and the Senate's budget (14%). However, it is the additional 15% House budget reduction along with the loss in Federal matching funds that most seriously concerns us.

To address this, HCQA Board Chair Elizabeth Brown and I have co-signed a letter to Speaker Frank Chopp, requesting reconsideration of this \$545,000 reduction directed by PS HB 1244. You can find this letter on our website at:

www.hcqa.wa.gov/PSHB1244_Chopp.pdf

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We are very pleased to announce that there were no Findings in this audit.

State Auditor's Office Completes HCQA Review

The Washington State Auditor's Office has completed their **Accountability for Public Resources and Legal Compliance Audit** of HCQA. The audit covered the 2004-2008 time period and was concentrated in the following areas: personal service contracts, general disbursements, background checks, and cash receipts. We are very pleased to announce that there were no Findings in this audit. As soon as the full Audit Results and Recommendations are posted by the State Auditor we will provide a link on our website for your convenience.

Collective Bargaining

As we informed you previously, given the current budget shortfall, the Governor did not include funding in her budget for the SEIU Healthcare775NW collective bargaining agreement that was awarded by Arbitrator Timothy Williams last year. Now, both the House and Senate have followed suit in their respective budget proposals. The Union has filed a lawsuit alleging that Governor Gregoire violated state law by failing to fund the home care worker contract. The case has been heard by the Washington State Supreme Court. That ruling has not yet been issued.

JLARC Performance Audit Underway

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) has begun its review of HCQA. JLARC conducts performance audits, program evaluations, special studies, and sunset reviews for the Legislature and the citizens of Washington State. The work on this audit will continue through the summer and the Final Report is scheduled to be issued in September.

Private Pay Access to Referral Registry

The HCQA 2007-2009 Strategic Plan as approved by the HCQA Board calls for us to provide an implementation strategy for a possible pilot program that is intended to enable private-pay consumers in a specific Referral Registry service area the opportunity to utilize the Registry. We will be presenting five such possible models at the April 21st HCQA Board Meeting. These models include a Free Internet Only Referral Service, a Referral Service for Veterans, Registry Access through Information and Assistance Services, a Registry Hourly Rate Model, and a Subscription Fee Model.

Artwork on Display at HCQA

By Janell Kearin, Administrative Assistant

Home Care Quality Authority's newest art display features photographs by the talented Alan Himsl. Alan grew up in Boise, Idaho and first became interested in photography when he was given a camera as a high school graduation gift. Alan and his wife Pat have lived in Washington since 1989. He has worked for the Department of Social and Health Services for over 20 years. Alan and Pat both enjoy hiking the many trails in both the Olympic and Mt. Rainer National Parks as well as getting out on Puget Sound and nearby lakes on their boat. As a result, Alan's photographic interests focus on outdoor scenic photos.

We appreciate the wonderful photographs Alan has shared with us. Thank you Alan!

Spring Greetings from the staff at the Home Care Quality Authority!



HCQA Staff from left to right: Rick Bacon - Special Projects, Sherri Wills-Green – Director of Referral Registry Services, Janell Kearin – Administrative Assistant, Lisa Livingston – Program Manager, Vicki Payne – Executive Assistant and Rick Hall, Executive Director.

Consumer Training DVD Released by HCQA
YOUR CHOICE:
How to Hire an Individual Provider

This professionally produced, consumer training video features five individuals and their families who use in-home care services as they share their experience in finding a provider. The video covers the process of seeking available providers, initial telephone screening, face-to-face interview tips and use of the Referral Registry. The DVD is available through the Home Care Referral Registries upon request. Call 800-970-5456 to order your complimentary copy. Visit <http://www.youtube.com/hcqa> to preview.



Referral Registry Services Update

By Sherri Wills-Green, Director of Referral Registry Services

Beginning this month, we are pleased to report that the Home Care Referral Registry offices throughout the state are ready to begin contracting individuals interested in becoming providers of long term in-home care. Each Registry site will offer a scheduled session at least once a month in which individuals can come and complete the DSHS Individual Provider Client Service Contract, receive an assigned Social Service Payment System number and complete the DSHS Orientation training. These efforts will go a long way towards creating a "labor ready workforce" of screened and qualified individuals ready to work. With these additional requirements completed, barriers to quickly finding and hiring the right provider are minimized for the client and case manager alike. HCQA appreciates the collaborative efforts of DSHS that made this possible.

Provider and Couple Appreciate Choices Available through the Referral Registry

By Lisa Livingston, Referral Registry Program Manager

Linda Leininger has worked as an in-home care provider for 10 years, finding clients through ads or by word of mouth, and then hoping she might be able offer the support that the person really needed. Oftentimes, schedules, locations or care issues prevented her from working for someone, and both she and the client had to start their search over again.

In late 2007, Linda saw an ad about the Home Care Referral Registry in her local newspaper. She went into her local Referral Registry office in Mount Vernon to enroll. After a short application and screening process Linda almost immediately started getting calls from people looking for an in-home care provider. She has since used the Registry as her sole source for finding work as a home care provider. "I like using the Referral Registry because it gives me a heads-up, more insight as to level of services and preferences. The Registry staff are really focused on a good match for everyone involved," Linda reflects. Through the Registry search and match process Linda began working for Patriecia Stovall in December.



Burden and Patriecia Stovall

Burden Stovall, Patriecia's, husband, did his best to help Patriecia manage her care needs at home. He wanted to offer her the best care that he could but soon realized he needed some help. Patriecia's case manager, through the Northwest Regional Council, recommended they use the Referral Registry to find that additional support.

Local Referral Registry staff worked with the Stovall's and their case manager to gather details about Patriecia. They were able to produce a list of providers who best matched with Patriecia's needs and preferences. The Stovall's contacted providers on the list, including Linda Leininger. After meeting with her, she was able to begin working almost immediately. "No time was wasted in getting connected with an in-home provider," Burden states, "The Registry is a good option for us. We have some choice in hiring the provider that is best suited for Patriecia."

If you are receiving state funded in-home services and would like more information on how to hire an in-home care provider, contact your local Home Care Referral Registry office at 1-800-970-5456.

HCQA Board Members

- ❖ Elizabeth Brown, Chair, Vancouver
- ❖ Andy Bell, Union
- ❖ Thomas Bungert, Tacoma
- ❖ Stan Fukui, Bothell
- ❖ Nan Kelly, Spokane
- ❖ Jesse Magana, Vancouver
- ❖ Dennis Mahar, Olympia
- ❖ Nicole Selene, Everett
- ❖ Nicki Thomas, Cathlamet

Upcoming Board Meetings

- April 21st, 2009, 10:00am – 2:00pm
- June 16th, 2009, 10:00am – 2:00pm
- August 18th, 2009, 10:00am – 2:00pm

All meetings are located in the HCQA Board Room,
4317 6th Avenue SE, Suite 101, Lacey, WA 98503

The Home Care Quality Authority Board consists of nine members appointed by the governor. Each board member serves a term of three years (RCW79.39A.230). The board includes at least five members who are currently using or have formerly used in-home care services.

For more information about HCQA and the HCQA Board visit www.hcqa.wa.gov

HCQA Resource Guide Now Available: *Stay Right Where You Are*

This resource guide covers subjects such as: getting started and assessing your needs, help that is available in the home, help that is available in the community, and taking care of business legally and financially. It also has a great topical directory of resources. We are excited about offering this guide to assist in the decision making process as people face changes in their lives. The Guide is available through the Home Care Referral Registries upon request. Call 360-493-9350 or e-mail info@hcqa.wa.gov to order your copy!

